

300 scholarships available for science students

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KAMPALA. A women's educational organisation and the United States-based Mastercard Foundation have announced a new package of 300 scholarship slots for Ugandan students to study science courses at tertiary institutions and universities.

Officials said the arrangements to roll out the study grants have been completed and beneficiaries will gain leadership development in order to prepare them to secure employment in sectors that contribute to the development of the communities.

Under the initiative dubbed 'Higher education access programme (Heap)', academically gifted students from disadvan-

tagged rural areas will be given scholarships to study science courses at tertiary level.

Local charitable organisation, Forum for African Women's Educationalists (Fawe Uganda) in partnership with US based Mastercard Foundation launched the eight-year programme worth \$10m that will see 180 students undertake degree courses and 120 others pursue diploma courses.

Ms Christine Semambo Sempebwa, the executive director of Fawe Uganda, described the scholarship as a platform to give all academically talented students from economically disadvantaged communities an opportunity to study and realise their dreams.

"This unique initiative seeks to help students exploit their

potential through increasing access to quality education in higher institutions of learning," Ms Sempebwa said, adding that the beneficiaries only need to go to school and study because they are offered 100 per cent scholarship.

POLICY

Capacity building.

Government is currently implementing a policy on science education to build capacity in the field of science in Uganda. As a result science subjects were made compulsory in schools and 75 percent of the government scholarships to public universities made science based.

The Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr Elioda Tumwesigye, commended the programme for supporting the government policy of promoting science and technology.

He asked the beneficiaries to use the scholarship to do better and change the world.

"Avoid irresponsible sex, abortion, alcoholism and drug abuse. You need to stay alive to see and use your background to achieve your lifetime dreams," the minister said.

Mastercard Foundation director in charge of education Peter Materu, said the scholarship is a bridging programme aimed at providing a second chance to promising students whose academic talents exceed their financial resources into university degree programme.